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REPLICABLE SURVEY EVIDENCE FOR AN 'ENCHANTMENT-PSI' LOOP

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Background: Prior research has modeled 'situational-enchantment' as a complex arousal state — with competing Emotional, Sensorial, Timeless, Rational, and Transformative themes — that disrupts normal waking experience with a sudden, unexpected, or profound awareness that ultimately culminates in a feeling of connection to a 'transcendent agency or ultimate reality.' Literature on spiritual emergencies and related phenomena might imply the existence of a self-reinforcing link between anomalous experiences and states of consciousness pertinent to enchantment.

Aims: We conducted a large-scale online survey to test enchantment as a special mental state that is conducive of psi-related or exceptional human experiences (EHEs).

Method: A convenience sample of 707 online respondents completed measures of Transliminality, Paranormal Belief (New Age Philosophy vs Traditional Paranormal Beliefs), EHEs, and Situational-Enchantment. After establishing the reliability and scalability of all measures via Rasch scaling, respondents were randomly assigned to either a Training set ($n = 471$) or Validation set ($n = 236$) for independent analysis.

Preliminary results: Competitive testing with path analysis on the Training set found that the best-fitting model affirmed our prediction of a self-reinforcing loop between Enchantment and EHEs (psi), which was mediated by a link between Transliminality and Paranormal Belief, and this solution was accompanied by excellent model fit. This same pattern was fully replicated in the Validation set, thereby establishing the empirical stability of our process model.

Conclusions: The results suggest that enchantment is as an aftereffect, example of, and catalyst for EHEs and putative psi. We discuss the findings relative to clinical contexts and future research. This should include real-time studies in externally-valid settings. New technologies such as our newly developed MESA 3.0 mobile application can help to facilitate such investigations.

Keywords: Enchantment; Exceptional human experiences; Paranormal belief; Psi; Transliminality

Publications:

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